



For Immediate Release

Making Barbados Better Part of Young Men's Role

Bridgetown, Barbados, October 21, 2024 – Barbados' young men are the country's future therefore the type of young men the country raises will determine its future.

This view was posited by the Director of Corporate Banking at CIBC Caribbean for Barbados and the OECS, Jeffrey Newton as he challenged teenage boys drawn from 13 of Barbados' secondary schools to step up and realise their full potential.

The teenagers, accompanied by their teachers, were gathered at Solidarity House Auditorium, last Friday for the 2025 launch of the Mr. Executive Interschool Business and Gentleman's Challenge, in which they are participants.

Reminding them of the adage that the country's youth was its future, Newton stressed the role of young men as he explained: "Our Caribbean region is traditionally built on a foundation of female-run households, and programmes like this that seek to build the confidence of our young men, so that they too can step up and realise their full potential in the development of our region are to be commended and encouraged."

The programme for which CIBC Caribbean is a platinum sponsor, aims to "cultivate positive business ethics and entrepreneurial skills among the participants as well as "equip them for the world of work" and instill them with a positive attitude toward contributing to society and help them become gentlemen in their attitudes, deportment, and relationships with women.

It includes a \$20 Challenge under which participants start and run a business and a school community project. At the end of the period of the challenge, there is a final pageant type event which includes a job interview, a leadership element, and a dinner date. Participants are judged in a preliminary and a final round.

The semi-finalists and the finalists also get the opportunity to visit the bank's regional head office to interact with the bank's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Mark St. Hill, his Executive Leadership team and other senior leaders and are exposed to the diverse career choices available at the bank in technology, marketing, legal, finance and property services.

Newton, who was on the judging panel for the 2024 finals said he "was truly impressed with the polished presentations, professional deportment, and confident speeches of all the finalists."

"The fine showing we saw from the participants on finals night started for them as it is starting for you here today. Like them, over the course of the coming weeks and months, you will be exposed to new experiences, knowledge and mentorship which will mould all of you who are taking part in this programme – whether you make it to the finals or not - into confident and well-rounded young men. I encourage you to take full advantage of the various developmental activities which you will be exposed to," he stressed.

Newton added that CIBC Caribbean is committed "to supporting activities and programmes which uplift our young men and seeks to shape them to be fully engaged and responsible citizens," as he listed several activities and initiatives which the bank through its charitable arm, FirstCaribbean Comtrust Foundation has been engaged in over the years and across communities.

During the launch, Winston Cumberbatch, who created the Mr. Executive Challenge seven years ago after he retired as head of the fifth and sixth-year programmes at the St. Leonard's Boys School, expressed satisfaction at the programme's growth as he thanked the sponsors, teachers, students, parents and mentors for their involvement.

The students were also urged to commit to the programme fully by coach Troy Holder who told them that midway through the programme, it may appear difficult, and they might feel like quitting.

But he said, "It is at that time that winners and losers are separated," adding that in a marathon those who run ten steps at the beginning and those who give up ten before the end, are given the same result, that is 'unfinished'.

"Do not let unfinished be your label," he stressed.

He then led them into repeating the mantra, "I am committed to finishing what I've started."

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Participants at the Mr. Executive 2025 launch pledging their commitment to complete the programme.



Director of Corporate Banking at CIBC Caribbean for Barbados and the OECS, Jeffrey Newton addressing the launch.



A section of the audience, in the foreground, from left, Michael Lucas, one of the programme's mentors; Jeffrey Newton, Director of Corporate Banking, CIBC Caribbean and Winston Cumberbatch, coordinator and founder of Mr. Executive.

CIBC Caribbean

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